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INSIDE A BETTING CLUB.

THERE appeared in a recent number of this *Journal* an article entitled 'Betting and Betting Men,' the writer of which detailed with great clearness the methods of 'the Ring.' He also touched briefly on what is termed 'starting-price' betting—that mode of gambling which is daily indulged in by thousands upon thousands of people who rarely, if ever, set foot on a racecourse itself. When not pursued more or less openly in the streets, much of this starting-price business is—as the writer of the article stated—carried on through the medium of errand-boys, waiters, small shopkeepers, &c., who, for a consideration, collect from bookmakers' clients the slips of paper on which are written particulars of the bets which the accompanying stakes cover.

But there is another method of backing race-horses at starting-price—a method known as 'betting on the "tape";' and it was with the object of learning something about this mode of speculation that, on a recent afternoon, the present writer set out with an acquaintance who had agreed to initiate him into the mysteries of a typical London betting club.

Situated in a busy thoroughfare, some ten minutes' walk north of the city boundary line, the grimy premises before which my companion suddenly halted with a 'Here we are!' had the dilapidated look of a private residence long vacant and neglected. My guide tapped lightly upon the frosted glass which formed the upper portion of the door, and instantly a small wooden panel flew up at the side of the porch. Through the pigeon-hole thus disclosed a sallow-visaged young man glanced keenly at us; then the panel was lowered again, the door opened, and we entered. That is to say, my companion entered; for not until the janitor's query as to whether I was 'a friend' had been answered in the affirmative was I (a non-member) allowed to cross the threshold of the club.

It was not a very inspiriting sight which met my curious gaze! A long, bare-looking apartment,

with slippery floor and smoke-blackened ceiling, from the centre of which was suspended a glittering chandelier of cut-glass; whitewashed walls, around almost the whole length of which ran a line of faded plush-covered seats; while in a gloomy corner stood a drinking bar, upon which was piled a heap of dirty glasses and empty bottles. 'The dancing hall,' my guide explained; 'there's a dance held here three or four times a week, you know.' He now led the way up a steep flight of stairs, well worn and totally innocent of covering. The landing gained, we found ourselves facing a baize-covered door, from the other side of which proceeded a curious clicking sound and the hum of voices. My companion tapped at the door, and, this being opened from within, we passed into a large comfortless room, which, but for a couple of long deal tables and a score or so of windsor chairs, was quite unfurnished. Stay, though. Within a railed-off corner of the apartment there stood a writing-table, a leather-covered arm-chair, and a walnut pedestal. Upon this latter was fixed a curious-looking little machine that clicked jerkily even as I gazed at it, while, from a slit in the glass cover which protected the mechanism, there slowly issued a continuous strip of white paper, about an inch and a quarter in width. This was the 'tape,' an instrument similar in construction to that which is to be found in every large newspaper and stockbroker's office; and by means of which wonderful contrivance the press-agencies are enabled to supply racing intelligence, market movements, &c., simultaneously to any number of people who subscribe to their service.

I glance round the room. Some dozen members of the club are present—young, middle-aged, and elderly men; a few prosperous-looking, the majority seedy and down-at-heel. For several minutes the 'tape' has been silent; now, however, as I sit down alongside my guide, it recommences its jerky 'click-click,' while the strip of paper mechanically unreels and falls into a shallow basket beside the pedestal. At the same

moment a portly, well-dressed individual, whose florid features are cast in an unmistakably foreign mould, suddenly emerges from an inner room. I learn that this is Mr —, the proprietor (and bookmaker) of the club, who has been heavily fined on more than half-a-dozen occasions for keeping gaming-houses in various parts of the metropolis. Mr — is followed by a younger man, who carries under his arms an account-book and a cash-box, both of ample proportions. These the clerk—for such he is—deposits upon the writing-table within the railed-off space, while his portly employer, after favouring me with a brief glance, sinks heavily into his chair, lights a cigar, and nods affably to several of the club members.

Again the ‘tape’ is silent. Racing, which today is being carried on in the Midlands, does not commence until two o’clock; and it still wants eight minutes to that hour. Evidently Mr — subscribes to what is termed a ‘full sporting service;’ for his clerk on glancing at the yard or so of paper strip which has accumulated in the basket, facetiously calls out: ‘Latest cricket and yachting, gentlemen!’ Finding, however, no interest displayed by those present in the scores and results in connection with the two pastimes mentioned, he tears off the printed strip and throws it into a corner. Meanwhile, the number of persons assembled has increased to about a score, the majority of whom are eagerly scanning sporting newspapers and ‘form-books’ with a view to ‘spotting’ winners.

Click—click! click—click! The bookmaker’s clerk hurries to the ‘tape’ instrument again, and the narrow paper commences to uncoil as he holds the torn end between finger and thumb. ‘First race—nine runners!’ he suddenly announces, and proceeds to call out the names of the animals and riders who are competing in the two o’clock event. This done, he tears off the strip and pins it upon a baize-covered board which hangs against the wall. ‘Now, gentlemen! make your bets on these nine runners,’ cries Mr —, tapping vigorously the lid of his capacious cash-box. A middle-aged man, who looks like a fairly well-to-do tradesman, approaches the writing-table, and, handing the bookmaker a sovereign, observes: ‘Half each way Knight Errant.’ [By this he means that he stakes ten shillings upon the horse in question winning, and ten shillings upon its getting a ‘place’—that is, first, second, or third.] Mr — throws the coin into his box, and by the time his clerk has made a note of the bet, several other club-members are waiting to do business. One man says: ‘One shilling Tantrum to win;’ another ‘Two shillings each way King of Spades;’ while others ‘lay out’ various sums on Knight Errant, which horse, judging from its recent performances, will start a warm favourite; or, as one youthful speculator knowingly observes: ‘The “Knight”’ll be a jolly hot pot—odds on, most likely.’

So the wagering briskly proceeds for four or five minutes, only two of the nine horses competing being supported to any extent. Then, as the ‘tape’ gives a few warning ‘clicks,’ the clerk shouts out: ‘They’re off! any more bets, gentlemen?’ A few backers, who until now have not been able to make up their minds, rush hurriedly to the table and support their ‘fancies;’ and scarcely has the last shilling bet been booked when the ‘tape’ recommences clicking. All conversation is hushed as Mr — leans forward and glances at the slowly uncoiling strip. ‘Negress has won, gentlemen,’ he unconcernedly remarks; and I notice the countenances of several present droop visibly, while a few other members give vent to exclamations of disgust. For Negress, it appears, is an unreliable animal, whose recent performances in public have not warranted ‘students of form’ in supporting her to-day for a single sixpence.

The winner having thus ‘come up’ from the course, a little wagering now proceeds between Mr — and several of his customers as to what animals have run second and third to Negress. Not long is there any uncertainty on this score; for the ‘tape’ soon clicks out the full result: ‘Negress—first; Knight Errant—second; Tantrum—third.’ This has been a profitable race for Mr —, his book showing that of the seven pounds or so staked only two shillings is ‘on’ the actual winner. The ‘price’ of the latter next ‘comes up’—ten to one against, while, a few minutes later, comes the ‘full betting,’ the prices of the second and third horses being respectively five to four against, and six to one against. Mr — now settles with those who have backed the winner, or Knight Errant and Tantrum for ‘places,’ the latter receiving their stakes and one-fourth of the odds quoted against the second and third horses winning. Altogether the bookmaker ‘pays out’ about three pounds, so that he clears four pounds or so on the race.

There are nearly forty backers assembled by the time ‘runners and jockeys’ for the second event are announced. Although this race is won by the favourite, its ‘price’ is so unremunerative (eleven to eight on) that the money staked upon the four other animals which have competed is more than sufficient to cover those odds. The third event on the programme falls to a seven to one ‘chance’ which has been supported for a few shillings only; while the succeeding race is secured by an unknown and unbacked colt against which the outside price of one hundred to six is returned.

Meanwhile, members continue to arrive in twos and threes; and the room is soon uncomfortably crowded. Here is a pale, anxious-eyed youth intent on exploiting an infallible ‘system’—so infallible that by the end of the afternoon it will reduce him to his last halfpenny. Mr — likes these ‘system-followers;’ for, whatever the system may be, he invariably recognises it as an ancient one which has years ago been tried and found wanting. He, the bookmaker, possesses capital; his ‘punters’—well, a few consecutive days of what they call ‘bad luck’ suffices to

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'break' them, when they disappear for a week or two, only to return with a few more sovereigns and a 'new' system, which is really no more new than it is workable.

At the end of the nearest table sits a bloated, gray-bearded man, whose coat is frayed and shiny with age, and whose boots are cracked in half-a-dozen places. This individual is to-day a follower of 'Dead Ship'—the tipster to a mid-day sporting sheet that emanates from a dirty alley off the Strand. My companion and guide informs me in a whisper that the wretched old fellow is always 'discovering' some new racing-prophet, whose tips he follows until all his money is gone. Now and then he has a run of luck, and turns his few poor shillings into sovereigns. In such a case he proceeds to 'play up' his winnings; that is, he plunges his whole capital upon a horse which is said to be a 'moral certainty,' a 'dead pinch'—a really 'good thing,' in fact. But the 'good thing' in question fails to win; whereupon our elderly punter angrily deserts the whole tribe of racing-tipsters until, from somewhere or other, he can obtain a few more shillings wherewith to renew his hopeless task of 'breaking the book-maker.'

Slowly and monotonously the afternoon drags on. 'Runners and jockeys' are announced for each successive event; names of winners come up on the 'tape,' followed by their 'starting-prices.' Successful backers are paid their winnings, while the unsuccessful look glum, and nervously turn the pages of 'form-books' in the hope of selecting the winner of the seventh, and last, race of the day. Alas! for their hopes of recouping a portion of their losses. It appears that out of the seven animals entered for the event in question only one is ready to compete; so the race results in a 'walk over.'

No sooner is this fact announced than a pack of cards is produced, and about a score of members draw their chairs around one of the long deal tables. The game they commence to play is known as *chemin de fer*; and Mr —'s clerk acts as 'croupier.' I learn that at each *coup* effected by the 'banker,' sixpence of his winnings is placed in the croupier's box for the benefit of the club proprietor. As *coups* are 'brought off' very frequently indeed, and as it is no uncommon thing for play to begin immediately after racing is over, and proceed continuously until eight or nine o'clock on the following morning, it will readily be understood that *chemin de fer* is an extremely profitable source of income to Mr —. During the hour I stood watching the game at least a dozen players dejectedly rose and left the table; so eagerly, however, was each seat thus vacated reoccupied by one or other of the crowd of onlookers who pressed around that play never once slackened for lack of gamblers.

I was not sorry when my companion at length expressed himself ready to depart. With a last look at the circle of flushed faces, we passed through the room, descended the stairs, and in a few moments stood once again in the open street.

So ended my visit to a club, whose object—vide the card of rules which lies before me—is to promote 'mutual entertainment, music, and social and intellectual improvement in general' (!) In London alone there exist an enormous number

of such establishments; and, cheerless dens though they are, they possess an irresistible attraction for thousands of men—an attraction which, in too many cases, leads to ruin, moral and physical.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER V.—WITH THE ELECT.

THE ragged beard had been trimmed to a point; the uncouth hair had been cut, shampooed, and invested with a subtle, inoffensive aroma; and a twenty-five-shilling Lincoln & Bennett crowned all without palpable incongruity. The brown, chapped neck, on the other hand, did look browner and rougher than before in the cold clutch of a gleaming stand-up collar. And a like contrast was observable between the ample cuffs of a brand-new shirt, and the Duke's hands, on whose hirsute backs the yellow freckles now stood out like half-sovereigns. Jack drew the line at gloves. On the whole, however, his docility had passed all praise; he even consented to burden himself with a most superfluous Inverness cape, all for the better concealment of the ready-made suit. In fine, a few hours had made quite a painfully new man of him; yet perhaps the only real loss was that of his good spirits; and these he had left, not in any of the shops to which Claude had taken him before dinner, but, since then, in his own house in Belgrave Square.

Claude had shown him over it between nine and ten; they were now arm-in-arm on their way from this errand; and the street-lamps shone indifferently on the Duke's dejection and Claude's relief. He had threatened instant occupation of his own town-house; he had conceived nightmare hospitalities towards all and sundry; and had stuck to his guns against argument with an obstinacy which made Claude's hair stand on end. Now the other had less to say. He had seen his house. The empty, echoing, inhospitable rooms, with perhaps a handful of electric lights freezing out of the darkness as they entered, had struck a chill to his genial heart. And Claude knew it as he led the way to his own cosy chambers; but was reminded of another thing as he approached them; and became himself, on the spot, a different man.

He had forgotten the two friends he had invited round that night for a private view of the large-paper edition. He was reminded of them by seeing from the street his open window filled with light. And his manner had entirely altered when he detained the Duke below, and sought with elaborate phrases to impress him beforehand with the transcendent merits of the couple whom he was about to meet. Jack promptly offered to go away. He had never heard tell of Impressionism, and artists were not in his line. What about the other joker? What did he do?

'Nothing, my dear fellow; he's far too clever a fellow to *do* things,' explained Claude, whose changed speech inclined the other to flight quite as much as his accounts of the men upstairs. 'The really delicate brains—the most highly sensitised souls—seldom spend themselves upon mere creative work. They look on, and possibly

criticise—that is, when they meet with aught worthy their criticism. My friend, Edmund Stubbs, is such an one. He has a sensitised soul, if you like! His artistic standard is too high, he is too true to his ideals, to produce the imperfect. He is full of ideas; but they are too big for brush, pen, or chisel to express them. On the other hand, he's a very fountain of inspiration, tempered by critical restraint, to many a man whose name (as my own) is possibly a household word in Clapham, where poor Edmund's is unknown. Not that I should pity him on that score; he has a holy scorn for what himself would call a "suburban popularity;" and, indeed, I am not with him in his views as to the indignity of fame generally. But there, he is a bright particular star who is content to shine for the favoured few who have the privilege of calling him their friend!"

"You do talk like a book, and no error!" said the Duke. "I haven't ever heard you gas on like that before."

And the pair went upstairs.

The bright particular star was discovered in Claude's easiest chair, with the precious volume in one hand, and a tall glass, nearly empty, in the other. The Impressionist was in the act of replacing the stopper in the whisky-decanter. And Claude accepted the somewhat redundant explanation, that they were making themselves at home, with every sign of approval. Nor was he slow in introducing his friends; but for once the Duke was refreshingly subdued, if not shy; and for the first few minutes the others had their heads together over the large-paper edition, for whose "decorations" the draftsman himself had not the least to say, where all admired. At length Claude passed the open volume on to his cousin; needless to say it was open at the frontispiece; but the first and the only thing that Jack saw was the author's name in red capitals on the title-page opposite.

"Claude Lafont!" he read out. "Why, you don't mean—to tell me—that's you, old brusher?"

Claude smiled and coloured.

"You an author!" continued the Duke, in a wide-eyed wonder. "And you never told me! Well, no wonder you talk like a book when you can write one too! So this is your latest, is it?"

"The limited large-paper edition," said Claude. "Only seventy-five copies printed, and I sign them all. How does it strike you—physically, I mean?"

"Physically isn't bad," murmured Stubbs; and Claude helped him to more whisky.

Jack looked at the book. The back was of a pale brown cardboard; the type had a curious, olden air about it; the paper was thick, and its edges elaborately ragged. The Duke asked if it was a new book. It looked to him a hundred years old, he said, and discovered that he had paid a pretty compliment unawares.

"There's one thing, however," he added: "we could chop leaves as well as that in the back-blocks!"

The Impressionist grinned; his friend drank deep, with a corrugated brow; the poet expounded the beauties of the rough edge, and Jack gave him back his book.

"I know nothing about it," said he; "but still, I'm proud of you, I am so. And I'm proud,"

he added, "to find myself in such company as yours, gentlemen; though, I don't mind telling you, if I'd known I'd be the only plain man in the room I'd never have come upstairs!"

And the Duke sat down in a corner, with his knife, his tobacco, and his cutty-pipe, as shy as a great boy in a roomful of girls. Yet this wore off, for the conversation of the elect did not, after all, rarefy the atmosphere to oppression; indeed, that of the sensitised soul contained more oaths than Jack had heard from one mouth since he left the bush, and this alone was enough to put him at his ease. At the same time, he was repelled, for it appeared to be a characteristic of the great Stubbs to turn up his nose at all men; and as that organ was *retrossé* to begin with, Jack was forcibly reminded of some ill-bred, snarling bulldog, and he marvelled at the hound's reputation. He put in no word, however, until the conversation turned on Claude's poems, and a particularly cool, coarse thing was said of one of them, and Claude only laughed. Then he did speak up.

"See here, mister," he blurted out from his corner. "Could you do as good?"

Stubbs stared at the Duke, and drained his glass.

"I shouldn't try," was his reply.

"I wouldn't," retorted Jack. "I just wouldn't, if I were you."

Stubbs could better have parried a less indecent, a less childish thrust; as it was, he reached for his hat. Claude interfered at once.

"My dear old fellow," said he to Jack, "you mustn't mind what my friend Edmund says of my stuff. I like it. He is always right for one thing; and then, only think of the privilege of having such a critic to tell one exactly what he thinks."

Jack looked from one man to the other. The sincerity of the last speech was not absolutely convincing, but that of Claude's feeling for his friend was obvious enough; and, with a laugh, the Duke put his back against the door. The apology which he delivered in that position was in all respects characteristic. It was unnecessarily full; it was informed alike by an extravagant good-will towards mankind and an irritating personal humility; and it ended, somewhat to Claude's dismay, with a direct invitation to both his friends to spend the entire month of August at Maske Towers.

Perhaps these young men realised then, for the first time, who the rough fellow was, after all, with whom they had been thrown in contact. At all events, the double invitation was accepted with alacrity; and no more hard things were said of Claude's lyrics. The flow of soul was henceforth as uninterrupted as that of the whisky down the visitors' throats. And no further hitch would have occurred had not the Impressionist made that surreptitious sketch of the Duke, which so delighted his friends.

"Oh, admirable!" cried Claude. "A most suggestive humouresque!"

"It'll do," said Stubbs the oracle. "It mightn't appeal to the suburbs, curse them, but it does to us."

"Grant the convention, and the art is perfect," continued Claude, with the tail of his eye on Jack.

'It is the caricature that is more like than life,' pursued Stubbs, with a sidelong glance in the same direction.

Jack saw these looks ; but from his corner he could not see the sketch, nor had he any suspicion of its subject. All else that he noted was the flush of triumph, or it may have been whisky, or just possibly both, on the pale, fringed face of Impressionism. He held out his hand for the half-sheet of paper on which the sketch had been made.

'I hope it won't offend you,' exclaimed the artist, hesitating.

'Offend me ! Why should it ? Let's have a look !'

And he looked for more than a minute at the five curves and a beard which had expressed to quicker eyes the quintessence of his own outward and visible personality. At first he could make nothing of them ; and even when an interpretation dawned upon him, his face was puzzled as he raised it to the trio hanging on his words.

'It won't do, mister,' said the Duke reluctantly. 'You'll never get saplings like them,' tapping the five curves with his forefinger, 'to hold a nest like that,' putting his thumb on the beard, 'and don't you believe it.'

There was a moment's silence. Then the Impressionist said thickly :

'Give me that sketch.'

Jack handed it back. In another moment it was littering the floor in four pieces, and the door had banged behind the indignant draftsman.

'What on earth have I done ?' cried the Duke, agast.

'You have offended Llewellyn,' replied Claude shortly.

'How ? By what I said ? I'll run after him this minute and apologise. I never meant to hurt his feelings. Where's that stove-pipe hat ?'

'Let me go,' said Stubbs, getting up. 'I understand the creative animal ; it's thin-skinned ; but I'll tell our young friend what you say.'

'I wish you would. Tell him I meant no harm. And fetch him down with you in August if I don't see you again.'

'Thanks, and good-night. You may count on us both. I'll put it all right with Ivor, never fear ; but these creative asses (saving your presence Lafont) never can see a joke.'

'A joke !' cried Jack, when he and Claude were alone.

'It was a very poor one,' said Claude severely.

'Look here,' said the Duke, 'what are you givin' us, old boy ? Seems to me you clever touchers have been getting at a cove between you. Where does this joke come in, eh ?'

And his good faith was so obvious that Claude picked up the four quarters of torn paper, fitted them together, and entered upon yet another explanation. This one, however, was somewhat impatiently given and received. The Duke professed to think his likeness exceedingly unlike, when, indeed, he could be got to see his own outlines at all, and Claude disagreeing, a silence fell between the pair. Jack sought to break it by taking off his collar (which had made him miserable) and putting it in his pocket with a significant look ; but the act provoked no comment. So the two men sat, the one smoking cigarettes, the

other his cutty, but neither speaking, nor yet so much as reading a line. And the endless roar of Piccadilly, reaching them through the open windows, emphasised their silence, until suddenly it sank beneath the midnight chimes of the city clocks. In another minute a tiny, tinkling echo came from Claude's chimney-piece, and the Duke put down his pipe and spoke.

'My first whole day in London a goner,' he said ; 'and a pretty full day it's been. Listen to this for one day's work,' and as he rehearsed them, he ticked off the events on his great brown fingers. 'Got run in—that's number one. Turned up among a lot of swells in my old duds—number two. Riled the cleverest man you know—number three—so that he nearly cleared out of your rooms ; and, not content with that, hurt the feelings of the second cleverest (present company excepted) so that he *did* clear—which is number four. Worst of all, riled *you*, old man, and hurt *your* feelings too. That's the finisher. And see here, Claude, it isn't good enough and it won't do. I won't wash in London, and I'm full up of the hole ; as for my own house, it gave me the fair hump the moment I put my nose inside ; and I'd be on to make tracks up the bush any day you like—if it weren't for one thing.'

'What's that,' said Claude, 'if it's a fair question ?'

The other concealed his heightened colour by relighting his pipe and puffing vigorously.

'I'll tell you,' said he ; 'it's that old girl and—what's the daughter's name again ?'

'Olivia.'

'Olivia. A beautiful name for a beautiful girl ! She's all that and more.'

'And much more.'

'You see, she's as good inside as out ; she has a kind heart.'

'I have always found it so,' said Claude, 'and I've known her since she was a child.'

The two kinsmen, who had been so wide apart a few minutes since, were now more than ever mutually akin. They drew their chairs together ; but the touchstone was deep down in either heart.

'You knew her when she was a child,' repeated the Duke in a kind of awe. 'Yes, and I dare say, now, you used to play with her, and perhaps take her on your knee, and even pull her hair and kiss her in them old days. Yet there you sit smoking cigarettes !'

His own pipe was out. He was in a reverie. Claude also had his own thoughts.

'The one thing was this,' said the Duke at length : 'would the old woman and her daughter come to see us up the country ?'

Claude was torn two ways. The Towers scheme was no longer his first anxiety. He returned to it by an effort.

'They would,' he said. 'Lady Caroline told me so. They would come like a shot in August. She said so herself.'

'Would you put me up to things in the meantime ? Would you be showing me the ropes ?'

'The very thing I would like to do so far as I am able.'

'Then we'll start to-morrow—I mean to-day. That settles it. And yet—'

'Out with it,' said Claude, smiling.

'Well, I will. I mean no harm, you under-

stand. Who am I to dare to look at her? Only I do feel as if that girl would do me a deal of good down there—you know, in making me more the sort of chap for my billet. But if she's gone and got a sweetheart, he might very easily object; so I just thought I'd like to know.'

'She hasn't one, to my knowledge,' said Claude at length.

'Is that a fact?' cried the Duke. 'Well, I don't know what all you fellows are thinking of, but I do know that I am jolly glad. Not from any designs of my own, mind you—I haven't as much cheek as all that—but to save trouble. Do you know, Claudy, I've had a beast of a thought off and on all the night?'

'No; what was that?'

'Why, I half suspected she was your own girl.'

H A I L S T O N E S.

HAIL is a familiar phenomenon of nature which in this country attracts but little attention, because its effects are, generally speaking, quite harmless; it is very rare indeed that the hailstones are bigger than a pea, and although they create a certain amount of noise banging up against our windows, they are seldom of sufficient size and violence to succeed in breaking them.

It is very different in other countries which are rather nearer the equator than we are; in them it is not uncommon to have violent hailstorms, in which the stones are so large that the damage to property, and even human life, is apt to be very considerable. Such a one occurred in Northern India, 1st May 1888, which, besides damage to cattle, crops, and smaller things, caused much loss of life. The collector said in his report that at Moradabad alone there were not less than two hundred and thirty deaths through it; those caught in the open were simply pounded to death, though doubtless many lightly-clad natives, who may simply have been stunned, were killed by the intense cold consequent on being practically packed in ice for a short time. Spring-time in India is the customary period for native marrying, and many marriage parties caught, far from shelter, were done to death in this terrible manner. This great mortality naturally reminds one of the battle of the Israelites with the five kings of the Amorites, when 'they were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.'

Storms of equal size and violence have occurred much nearer home, although fortunately with considerably less loss of life, probably because the farther north they occur, the longer warning they give, and shelter may be nearer and clothes less scanty. At Gratz, in August 1891, hailstones from one and a half to two and a half inches in diameter fell and formed heaps of ice as much as three feet deep in some places; the sudden cold also was very trying, the temperature during the storm falling as much as thirty-eight degrees Fahrenheit.

Thunder and lightning and strong uncertain winds invariably accompany hailstorms, and of these the wind is accountable for no small amount of the mischief, for it is always of

great violence, generally coming from more than one direction, and so giving rise to whirlwinds, which sweep along, leaving permanent marks of their destructive power. Another characteristic of hailstorms is that they are always very narrow, so that one that travels from one to two hundred miles will most probably not exceed eight to ten miles in breadth: they will arise in some given place, and thence perhaps travel in only one direction, or perhaps from the spot where it first occurs two storms will travel in different directions; moreover, they do not always travel in a straight line, their course being frequently curved. In this way very curious results may happen, as, for instance, one landowner may escape any damage whatever, while his neighbours on every side suffer considerably; or half of one celebrated vine district may be seriously damaged, while the other half escapes altogether. This would form a grand excuse for many hotel proprietors whose cellars are scarcely up to the mark.

It was thought that as lightning invariably accompanied hailstorms that it was in some way accountable for them, and indeed many hold to this still; so it was conjectured that lightning-conductors might, by carrying off the electricity from the clouds, prevent the occurrence of the storm. These were tried in France by some vine-growers, but they asserted that they had a contrary effect, and were the means of bringing down the storm on the vineyards they were meant to protect, so that to be of any good the 'paragrelés' would have to be erected two or three miles to windward; this of course might seriously interfere with somebody else, so could scarcely be done.

The size of hailstones varies from the small pellets familiar in this country—about a quarter of an inch in diameter—to some as large as cricket-balls. In the storm previously mentioned as occurring in Northern India, stones were picked up at Delhi weighing four ounces, and others carefully measured were found to be as much as two and three-quarter inches in diameter. Fairly large ones have been known to fall in England, for Pepys in his diary mentions some as large as walnuts having fallen at Harwich in 1666; and at Liverpool, in June 1889, there was a storm in which they were found to range from seven-eighths of an inch to an inch and three-quarters in diameter; these also might be described as being as large as walnuts. Fortunately this size is of very rare occurrence in Great Britain, else our already handicapped agriculturists and fruit-growers would have yet another enemy to deal with, and a dangerous one too, for hailstorms are more frequent in late spring and summer than at any other time of the year.

The form which hailstones take varies a good deal, one of the most interesting being oval or round, and formed of layers of ice alternately clear and opaque. They were of this kind in the above-mentioned storm which took place at Liverpool, and consisted of four or five layers. But Professor Olmsted of Yale College, U.S., has counted as many as thirteen layers in some large hailstones that fell in America a few years ago. His explanation of their formation is very ingenious, and has found much

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favour with meteorologists. The air in the centre of a whirlwind is somewhat rarefied, and when a current of air charged with vapour is drawn into this space, it may be condensed into rain, or at a high elevation into snow. Now if the rain thus formed is drawn up by an ascending current into the snowy region, it will, if kept there long enough, be frozen, and then, if propelled outside the whirlwind, fall to the ground. But in falling the hailstones may be caught up by another current and again drawn into the whirling gyrations of air, when the moisture condensed on them during their fall will be frozen, thus forming another layer of ice. This may be repeated several times, and thus give rise to the onion-like formation which is so characteristic.

There is, however, another form that large hailstones frequently take which is less easy of explanation ; it is when they have a nucleus of dull-looking ice which is covered with ice crystals, more or less radiating from the centre, and sometimes forming hexagonal prisms, which give the hailstones sharp, jagged outlines. This formation has puzzled many observers, but a beautiful experiment of M. Dufour tends to throw some light upon it. He suspended some drops of water in a mixture of almond-oil and chloroform, which was of such consistency that the water assumed a spherical shape, and remained in the middle of the mixture without any tendency to rise or sink. In this condition it could be cooled down much below freezing-point without congealing ; but when it received a sharp electric shock, or if a piece of ice was brought in contact with it, it instantly solidified, and the spheroidal mass thus frozen resembled a hailstone with a nucleus of opaque ice surrounded by crystals of ice radiating from the centre. It is noteworthy in respect to this experiment that hailstorms are almost invariably accompanied by electrical disturbances in the atmosphere, and for a long time theories attempting to explain the formation of hailstones have been based on this fact ; but of late meteorologists have been inclined to think that the thunder and lightning are possibly as much the effect as the cause of hailstorms.

Professor Reinsch has related how he examined some hailstones which appeared to have a bubble in the centre of them ; when allowed to melt, before they had gone very far they burst, and he found that the volume occupied by the air thus liberated was fifty times greater than that which it occupied in the hailstone. He did not attempt to give an explanation of such a remarkable occurrence, avowing that it was a regular puzzler.

The ordinary small hailstones are not so puzzling, and the general text-book definition of 'frozen rain' would seem to be not very far out, for an Italian professor actually saw it being formed one day. He was seated at a window of a house forming one side of a courtyard, and noticed the rain streaming from a roof on his right being driven back and up in thick drops by a cold north wind. Suddenly a south wind blew, and the drops of rain tossed hither and thither were quickly transformed into hailstones. When the south wind ceased, the hailstones also ceased being formed ; but

when the wind blew again, once more the hailstones became visible. He states that this occurred two or three times in ten minutes.

However, it is doubtful if the true explanation has been yet found. Of theories there is an abundance of all sorts, from the simple 'frozen rain' to an elaborate one describing them as coming from interplanetary space ; but one has not yet been formed that will include all the observations—and they are very varied—that have been made.

A CHILD OF TONKING.

CHAPTER IV.

JUST before sunset that afternoon a native messenger put in an appearance at the fort. He hailed from a village some twenty miles up the river, and brought a letter from a French missionary, in which it was stated that the Chinese had crossed the boundary and were threatening the place. Any assistance which could be rendered must be sent at once, otherwise it would be too late. Within five minutes of the commandant's breaking the seal the contents of the letter were known all over the fort, and the regiment was half mad with excitement. The prospect of seeing a little active service was most grateful to men long since tired to death of the monotonous barrack life.

The buildings resounded with expressions of delight ; conjectures as to when a start would be made, and whether the enemy would stand their ground, were to be heard on all sides. Only Black Rat held aloof. He feared lest he might be chosen to accompany the party, not because he had any apprehension as to the danger of the expedition, but because he feared lest anything should happen to the child during his absence. However, he had not long to wait before his fate was known. Within half-an-hour of the receipt of the letter it was announced that B Company were to have the honour of chastising the invaders. Now both Black Rat and Long Jean were members of that portion of the regiment, and, contrary to their usual custom on such occasions, both their hearts were heavy within them. Little Tata watched their preparations with considerable interest from the Auvergnat's bed, and when they had finished, demanded to be carried upon his chief protector's shoulder according to custom. Black Rat, however, put him by, and went in search of a man whom he thought he could trust. Having found him, he confided the child to his care, bidding him, under pain of death, see that no harm occurred to him during their absence. The man gave his promise, and, when they had bidden the little one an affectionate farewell, the two men took their places in the ranks, and presently marched out of the fort. The colonel's wife watched them, a smile hovering round the corners of her mouth. She was aware that three days must certainly elapse and possibly more, before they could return, and she congratulated herself upon her astuteness in arranging that that particular company should be the one selected.

Three days did pass before the company returned to the fort. During that time they lost half of their number, and inflicted as pretty a

little defeat upon the marauding Chinese as any commanding officer could desire. As they approached it, and for the first time since he had known it, the grim fort standing on its little eminence looked like home to Black Rat. He pictured the baby's delight at seeing him, and as soon as they had crossed the bridge and entered the stockade, he began to look about him in the hope that he might catch a glimpse of Tata's face. Long Jean was equally eager, but on the other hand he was less demonstrative; but when they were dismissed he was not long in accompanying his comrade in the search. They made their way to their own barrack-room, but Tata was not there. Black Rat questioned the men he saw, but it seemed to him they returned him evasive answers. He called to the little one in stentorian tones, helped by Long Jean, but without success. The child was not to be found. With a fear in their hearts that they had never known before, they went in search of the man to whose care they had entrusted their treasure. The fellow would gladly have avoided them, but they were not to be balked. Long Jean held him in his ponderous grasp, while Black Rat, whose voice shook with passion, questioned him as to his charge. Even when he had succeeded in disengaging his throat from the Auvergnat's grasp, it was little the man could tell them. The baby had cried a little after his friends' departure, but had soon recovered, and had given no trouble until the middle of the day following, when he had suddenly and unaccountably disappeared during the time the man was standing sentry. Where he had gone no one could tell. Search was made in every direction, but to no purpose. The colonel's maid was questioned, but she denied having seen him at all. She had something more to do than to be looking after babies, she said, and at the time this was taken as conclusive evidence that she knew nothing whatsoever of the case in hand. Since the colonel's departure they had searched the whole fortress from one end to the other, but without reward. Little Tata was as lost as it was possible for a child to be.

When the man had finished his tale, Black Rat informed him that he intended to thrash him within an inch of his life. This he did to his complete satisfaction, and then went off to make further inquiries. That the colonel's wife had taken the opportunity of his being out of the way to abduct the child he felt as positive as he was of his own identity. But he would be even with her yet! When night had fallen he called Long Jean aside, and spoke with him earnestly for the space of half-an-hour. At the end of that time they separated—Black Rat in the direction of the kitchen, his companion to return to his own room.

At the usual hour they retired to rest, wearied out with their anxiety. During the evening scarcely a man had spoken to them. They were too dangerous for any liberty to be taken with them. They were allowed to go their own way unmolested; and as they had put their veto on conversation, within an hour of the lights being put out every man was fast asleep. When they had allowed sufficient time to elapse they rose and dressed themselves. Then carrying their boots in their hands, and treading softly lest they

should wake the others, they made their way towards the door, stopping at the arm rack to withdraw their rifles and as many rounds of ammunition as they could discover. This done, they crept along in the shadow of the veranda towards the eastern wall. Fortunately the night was dark, and thick clouds covered the face of the sky, otherwise they could scarcely have failed to have been discovered. Pausing at an arranged spot to pick up a small sack of provisions which Black Rat had placed there earlier in the evening, they pushed on to the wall itself. To surmount the stockade was a matter of no small danger and difficulty. The spikes were the danger; to avoid the sharpened bamboos on the other side without attracting the attention of the sentries was the difficulty. When a large portion of the fence gave way under the Auvergnat's great weight, Black Rat felt certain that they could not fail to be discovered. But either the noise made was not so great as they imagined or the sentries were not as watchful as they might have been; at any rate, nothing came of it. Having satisfied themselves upon this point, they placed the two boards they had brought with them for that purpose upon the spikes, and thus made their way gingerly across. Once on terra firma they set off as fast as they could crawl in the direction of the river. The fact that they might be fired upon by their own garrison, that they might be captured by the Chinese, scarcely entered their heads; while what they intended to do beyond recapturing the child in the event of their catching up the party who had started so long ahead of them was equally uncertain. It was sufficient for the time being that they desired to reach the river and to find a boat.

At last, after nearly half-an-hour's painful crawl, hiding behind every bush and taking advantage of every inequality in the ground, they found themselves on the river bank. A little higher up, but fortunately on the same side, were a number of small native canoes or sampans, one of which they made haste to secure. Then, placing their rifles, ammunition, and provisions on board a canoe, they themselves embarked, and pushed out into mid-stream. They were both conversant with the track the other party would have to follow, and they were also aware that, if Fate were kind, they could gain on them considerably by means of the river.

It is doubtful whether either of them properly appreciated the curious nature of their position. To all intents and purposes they were deserters from the French army, and as such were punishable with death. That they had appropriated another person's boat was a fact of minor significance. All they thought of was the object of their mission. On their right was the fort, now standing out, a clear-cut black mass, against the starlit sky. On their left the tiled roofs of the Chinese village rose in broken confusion, while before them and behind was the dark expanse of river merged to the southward in the still darker shadow of the hills. Presently they turned the corner, and the high bank shut out the last sign of the fort and village from their view.

For the first few hours they paddled on with feverish energy, scarcely speaking at all, and then only in a whisper. After that they settled down to their work in a more sober fashion, taking it

in turns to paddle and to rest. By the time day dawned they had made considerable progress ; by mid-day they were more than half-way upon their journey. It was their intention to follow the river to a certain point where the course the others were steering would bring them to an old fort, long since abandoned, but situated within a quarter of a mile of the water's edge. On making for the capital from the interior it was customary to spend the night in this fort, and Black Rat did not for a moment believe that the people he was pursuing would depart from the usual routine.

Throughout the afternoon they paddled on, keeping their eyes open for any possible enemy. But as the sun sank behind the jungle trees, they slackened their speed lest by any chance the commandant's party should be in the vicinity, and they might thus reveal their identity. Suddenly Black Rat, who was sitting in the bows, stopped paddling, and held up his hand.

'Listen,' he whispered ; and as he spoke the sound of heavy firing broke upon their astonished ears.

What could it mean ? Only one thing. The colonel's party were being attacked by the pirates who were known to infest the neighbourhood. He spoke the thoughts that were in his mind, and instantly drove the boat into the bank with a sweep of his paddle. Then bidding his companion conceal it and himself among the canes and await his return, he sprang out and disappeared into the jungle.

Nearly two hours elapsed before he returned. When he did his face was very troubled.

'*Sacre bleu*,' he said to himself on discovering the Auvergnat stretched out fast asleep. 'I believe the pig would snore on the Day of Judgment. Wake up ! wake up !'

When he had aroused the giant to a knowledge of the present, he poured his tale into his ears. From what he had seen he had discovered that, without a doubt, it was the colonel's party that had taken refuge in the old fort. The Chinese had surrounded them on every side but that of a creek which led into the river, and it was evident that unless assistance came to them within the next few hours, which they must consider unlikely, they could not hope for anything but to be cut to pieces. In the face of this calamity individual hatred was forgotten. The woman had treacherously stolen what they valued most in the world, but the colonel and their comrades were innocent and in danger. At any cost it was their duty to attempt to save them. Black Rat asserted this with considerable emphasis, and Long Jean, accustomed to obey, did not contradict him. There was one way in which it could be done, the former knew, and only one.

Accordingly, as the moon rose above the jungle on the other side of the river, they resumed their places in the boat and paddled slowly down stream, keeping in the shadow of the bank as much as possible in order that their presence might not be detected. They were making for the entrance of the creek which led up to the fort in question. Once in it, it was as much as they could do to make any progress at all, so shallow was the water and so closed in was it and overhung by the jungle. At last, however, their faces and hands cut by the sharp grasses, and

dead tired by reason of their cramped positions, they reached the spot for which Black Rat was aiming. This was a low beetling cliff, rising sheer from the water's edge, and completely enclosed by undergrowth.

Bringing the boat up to the mouth of a small cave which could only be seen when the bushes were parted, he sprang out and assisted his comrade to do the same. Then, having taken their rifles and ammunition from the boat, Black Rat made a torch of dry grass, lit it, and led the way into the cavern. It was an uncanny place, made more so by the reverberation of the firing above ; the walls were wet, and hung with stalactites. The Auvergnat had never heard of or seen the place before, but his companion, who had once been a member of the fort's garrison, was quite aware of its existence. At the end of the cavern was a small passage, plainly the work of human hands, which conducted them by a number of steps to the centre of the barrack square above. To lift the stone that covered it, and to spring up into the open air, was the work of a moment. Then they looked about them.

A sorrowful scene it was that they had presented to them. Scattered about in all directions were bodies of dead men. Out of the escort of six which had accompanied the colonel and his wife only one remained alive, and he was leaning against the gate severely wounded. The colonel himself lay unconscious by the centre hut, his head resting on his wife's lap, and a pool of blood forming at his side. Céleste stood, grim and despairing, behind her, and she was holding in her arms the child whose absence had caused Black Rat to follow them.

So numbed was the colonel's wife with terror that when she saw the two men whom she had so cruelly deceived rise, like spirits, from the ground before her, she was too far gone to express even the faintest show of wonderment. They seemed to be part and parcel of the fate which was now pursuing her. The child, however, recognised them at once, and gave utterance to a little cry. Indeed, had not Céleste restrained him, he would have leapt from her arms to greet them. Almost at the same instant the colonel opened his eyes, and a moment later recognised the men before him.

'Thank God we are saved,' he cried, imagining them to be part of some rescuing force. 'Who is commanding you ? And how on earth did you manage to get here in time ?'

'*Ma foi*, because we have deserted, *mon commandant*,' answered Black Rat, finding a curious delight in his audacity. 'And it is the fault of your precious wife that we have done so. She stole our child, and we have followed you to cut your throats and to get him back.'

The colonel turned his white face towards the woman they accused.

'So you lied to me in this also ?' he said. 'You told me you had bought the child, and were bringing it away with this man's consent.'

Her audacity having quite deserted her, she did not answer. There was a little pause before the colonel spoke again.

'We are in your hands now ; what are you going to do ?'

'To save you,' answered Black Rat, who had by this time made up his mind. 'Listen to what I have to say, and waste no time in asking

questions. This place is surrounded. There is no chance of our being able to hold out till help comes, so whoever remains here will be a dead man before morning. Remember you have your women to look after. See you this passage? It leads down to the stream beyond the cliff. Our boat is there with provisions. You must get on board her, and then make your way to the mission at Songhay. All being well, you should be there by daylight.'

'But why do you give these instructions? You will come with us, of course. It is your boat.'

'Pardon, *mon commandant*, there is not room. The boat will hold but three at most. Some one must stay to cover your retreat. If those devils forced their way in and found us flown, they would suspect that there is another way out of this place, and then they would catch you before you could reach the river.'

'And you are going to give your lives for us, who have treated you so badly?'

'Tut, tut, that is nothing. It is not for your sake or the women's. It is for the child. If you wish to save their lives, you must swear to me, on your hope of heaven, that as long as you shall live that child shall be your care. Only thus can I let you go.'

As he finished speaking, the man leaning against the wall cried:

'They are coming! They are coming!'

Bidding Long Jean be off to the gate, Black Rat waited for the promise. That given, he assisted the colonel to rise, bade his wife pull herself together if she desired to save her life, and took the child from Céleste's arms. What his feelings were as he pressed that little form to his breast and kissed the tiny face for the last time on earth no one will ever know. The colonel could scarcely believe that this was the same man whom he had once looked upon as the blackest of his black sheep.

On reaching the entrance to the subterranean passage, the latter surrendered the infant to Céleste's care, and upheld the stone for them to make their way below. The colonel came last. 'Mon Dieu, I will not go,' he said, and attempted to move back. 'My brave fellows, my children, you who are so noble, I shall stay and if need be die with you.'

'You are mad, my colonel,' cried the other in an ecstasy of impatience. 'You are wounded and useless. You could do nothing here. Besides, who is to protect the women? Go; this delay may ruin everything.'

But the colonel still held back until Black Rat took him by the shoulders and thrust him down the passage by main force, dropping the stone over the aperture behind him. Then, with a last look round, he went forward to the gate. If the lives of those in the boat were to be saved, they must endeavour to hold the gate and distract the enemy's attention as long as possible.

It was a very different 'Black Rat' who approached the gate a minute or so later. He seemed to have gone mad with excitement. He slapped Long Jean upon the shoulder and bade him prepare himself for the *frête* that was about to begin. He sang, he jested, and then he reeled as if he were drunk and fell against the wall.

'Come, you snipe,' he cried to the astonished remnant of the colonel's guard as he recovered

himself. 'This is going to be the warmest time we have ever known. Cheer up, *mon ami*; it was for this we were born into the world. *Pardieu!* the odds are great against us; but *ma foi*, if we cannot beat them, we'll at least show them how soldiers of France can die.'

As he finished speaking there was the sound of rustling feet outside, then the worm-eaten gate was broken down, and a second afterwards the three men were fighting like wild cats for their lives.

Long Jean was the first to fall, but not before he had done terrible execution. Little Pierre was the next to go, clutching at the knees of the man who stabbed him as he dropped, and driving what remained of his broken bayonet in below the ribs. Black Rat was left alone, but he did not seem to notice it. He continued to fight with the same cool, desperate courage until he had a heap of dead piled upon the ground before him like a wall. His strength, however, was failing fast, and it was not very long before his enemies found the opportunity they wanted. Then he fell forward with a choking cough, clutching at the body of the man upon whom he lay, and muttering with his dying breath:

'Tata—little Tata—remember it is for thee.'

Incredible as it may seem, the colonel and his party reached the mission post in safety and arrived at Haiphong in due course. The former has been true to his promise, and Tata is now a well-brought-up child of eight who goes to school, can read and write, and is quite familiar with the heroic tale of the men who gave their lives to save him. What his fate would have been had madame been permitted the care of his career it is impossible to say. Fortunately, however, she eloped in a very creditable company soon after their arrival at the capital, so that all trouble on that score was obviated. Of the vengeance that the French troops took upon the murderers of their comrades nothing need be said, save that it was complete in every sense of the word. To-day the fort is razed to the ground, and the jungle has grown over the place where it stood; but a large mound by the creek side, kept clear of weeds by every regiment that passes that way, as a sacred duty, still serves to show where lie at rest the men who so nobly gave their lives to save not only their wounded commander and two helpless women, but also what they loved better than all else in the world,

A CHILD OF TONKING.

LUMBERING IN CANADA.

By C. FAIRBAIRN.

THE business of timber getting, or 'Lumbering,' as it is named in our North American Colonies, is one of great importance, being second only to agriculture in extent and value, and nowhere else is the process better understood or practised. The rivers, the great chains of lakes, and even the peculiarities of climate, are all made to contribute to its success.

A glance at the map of Canada shows a large number of small lakes connected by rivers. Many of these are quite dry in summer, but when the snow melts are large streams, forming continuous chains of communication with the great lakes north and west; whilst those flowing southward

empty into the St Lawrence, the vast river which forms one of the principal highways of the province. On its broad surface it carries to the Atlantic all the products of the forests, which without it could only be forwarded with much labour and at great cost.

In winter the means of communication between places wide apart are greatly improved; roads that are comparatively impassable all the rest of the year may then be traversed with ease and rapidity. Lakes, treacherous swamps, and rivers are frozen hard, and with a few inches of snow are converted into excellent highways for sleighs. There is no method of travelling more pleasant and exhilarating than gliding over the snow with a scarcely felt motion to the merry sound of the sleigh bells; and these sleighs often carry loads which would tax our horses heavily even on our splendid macadamised roads. But above all, strong frosts followed by abundance of snow are welcomed right heartily by the Canadians, and especially by the lumberman, for without these his occupation would be very doubtful of success for that season. They mean to him good roads for conveying his logs to the rivers and lakes. They also mean sufficient water to flood the rivers when the snow melts in spring, and so get his timber to its destination earlier. In short, an open winter with but little snow means—in Canada—a calamity entailing enormous loss.

Canada, while in the possession of many wonderful advantages so admirably suited to her needs, also holds the largest and most valuable forests of pine in the world; more than one half its entire surface, or about a hundred thousand square miles of pine-forest, is still available, and forms the preserve from which the annual supply is obtained. The proprietary rights over these lands are held by the Canadian Government, and licenses or leases are sold to lumbermen, by auction to the highest bidder. These leases are for twenty-one years, and embrace all the timber of a certain kind over a number of square miles called 'limits.' When the timber is removed the land is ready for the settler, and the interest of the lumberman in the 'limits' terminates.

The lumberman is the pioneer in the settlement of the land. The roads he has made in the depths of the forest are ready for the farmer; and in winter when agriculture is at a standstill, the farmer often finds employment for himself, horses, and cattle in the lumber-camps. Situated as the farmer often is—far from any outlet for his produce—he there too obtains a market at home with good prices.

Lumbering operations begin early in the autumn. An explorer—an experienced backwoodsman long accustomed to forest life—finds his way into the 'bush,' and in these strange wild solitudes, where to the unaccustomed traveller every new scene is so exactly similar to those he has passed through, he never misses his way. Wandering on, he comes across a 'blazed line'—that is, where a piece of bark has been cut from a tree deep enough to leave on it a white mark, or where perhaps some saplings have been cut and heaped up; and keeping the same line he sees in the distance another 'blaze.' It may be the division line or boundary of two townships, or the guide to a settlement, or some distant woodland pasture, or it may lead to a pine grove marked for the axe

of the lumberman; and these marks are the finger-posts of the forest, intelligible only to those accustomed to forest life. The explorer seeks for some eminence, on which may be a lofty tree, and ascending this he marks the tall summit of a grove of pines, and taking the bearing by his compass he proceeds on his errand. The pine is singularly gregarious, and is usually found in family groups, which as a general rule occupy somewhat elevated land.

Having found the pine groves and the timber in sufficient quantity, the next step is to fix the most suitable place for an encampment. By judicious selection of the site a great deal of unnecessary labour may be avoided, for not unfrequently the timber has, on its way to its destination in the spring, to be driven through small lakes and rivers over a hundred miles before the St Lawrence is reached; and when we consider that this must be done within the short time required for the snow to melt, and the swollen rivers to decrease in volume, it is clear that all the appliances that can be employed to facilitate progress are put into requisition. These appliances are, no doubt, the result of long and accumulated experience, and show great ingenuity. Among them are slides for passing dangerous rapids or impassable falls, or blasting through rocks or other impediments in the beds of the rivers when they are dry, or straightening a bend in the stream where the loose timber might be caught, and so form a 'jam'—often a serious cause of delay. All these considerations have to be thought of in selecting a site for the camp. If there is timber within reach for more than one season's operations, then the encampment ought, if possible, to be central for the whole of the limits. It must also be near a plentiful supply of good water and convenient to the lake or river on which the logs are to be laid when frozen hard, and with easy access for bringing supplies of food, &c. When the arrangements are all satisfactorily completed, the explorer is joined by a gang of men to erect a dwelling-house or 'shanty,' besides stables, storehouse, and smith's or carpenter's workshops. At this time preliminary supplies of food, tools, &c., are brought into the forest, sometimes at the cost of a week's hard travelling, though when the snow comes the distance can be traversed in a single day.

There cannot be much done in the cutting of the timber before frost comes. There are two kinds of timber made—'square timber' and 'saw-logs,' although these are generally kept apart. When, however, both are prepared simultaneously, the square timber is selected from the best trees. It is almost all made for exportation to this side of the Atlantic, while saw-logs are taken to the sawmills, and cut up for the home market and the United States. When the snow comes the full complement of men are set to work, and in the clear frosty air it is almost incredible the amount of work the men can accomplish. They are well fed, and there seems to be something unusually stimulating in the atmosphere, while at the same time indolence finds its corrective in the severe cold. To a stranger, the long stern winter months in the forest would appear akin to banishment, with the same endless round of monotonous labour; for there are few of the men who enter

the woods in the autumn who ever think of going out to the front until the timber comes down the swollen river in the spring following. But the forest has its attractions to these back-woodsmen, as the ocean has for the sailor after a sojourn ashore. The long winter evenings are beguiled away by reading, jest, and song, and the clear frosty nights and starlit skies, varied by the roar of the storm in the woods, make the warmth and comfort of the shanty more appreciable by contrast. 'Early to bed and early to rise' is their motto, and long before daylight—breakfast over—they are tramping through the snow to the scene of their labours. It is a wild free life, and they seem to enjoy it thoroughly. In many of the camps there are Irish and French Catholics, and occasionally they are visited by a priest on Saturday evening. Sunday is then devoted to divine service. It is touching to see these men of wild and careless lives reverently and respectfully receiving the ministrations of their teacher. Early on Monday morning the priest is away through the snow with his blanket over his arm, with perhaps a tramp of eighty miles before he reaches his destination.

It is well for the lumberman when there has been, as mentioned, a good hard frost before snow comes. It hardens the swamps and covers the rivers and lakes with thick ice. A few inches of snow makes sleighing possible, and then the teamsters and cattle appear on the scene. Roads have been prepared, by cutting away the brushwood and removing all obstructions, to the place where the timber is laid on the ice. A chain is fastened to a piece of square timber, which slides easily over the snow; but saw-logs are collected in large quantities, and a strong low sled is loaded from one of the heaps, and after one or two journeys over the improvised roads where never was road or passage before, the team moves along with its heavy load, easily, swiftly, and noiselessly, the sleigh bells alone giving notice of the presence of any living thing. Sometimes these journeys extend to ten and twelve miles; but more usually two and three, or even shorter distances.

The transition from winter to spring in Canada is comparatively sudden; spring comes swiftly, like twilight in the tropics. Nature asserts her power with great rapidity; a very short time suffices to loosen the bands of winter, and the silence that was oppressive is broken. Then follows the melting of snow, flooding the rivers, which rise far above their usual level; and so we find the timber, which was piled up on the ice, now afloat, and ready to be taken to its destination. The camp is broken up, and a busy scene is developed.

The most exciting and dangerous part of lumbering now begins, with the greatest risk of loss to the lumberman in the season's operations. Some of the difficulties to be encountered may be unforeseen, and are to be met on the threshold of the journey; others follow to the end, if the camp has been so far back as to be beyond those appliances which experience has proved so necessary. The sledges are costly to make, and are not provided until there is a probability of their being largely used. Often before these are made the pioneer lumberman has to drive his timber—that is, run it through in single pieces—until he reaches the first place where sledges are in use; and

this may be a long distance, subject to all the risks of having to break up a 'jam.' A jam is usually caused by one or more of the single logs getting across or fast in a narrow part or bend of the river, perhaps out of reach of the men; the logs following in quick succession soon become piled up in inextricable confusion, which the accumulation of water above and all the efforts of the men fail to force away. Then begins a dangerous series of operations. The banks of the stream may be precipitous, or the ice may not be melted; and while the water flows over the logs, the men, with long iron-shod poles in their hands, make their way cautiously over them to where the 'jam' originates. The scene appears to a spectator one of terrible risk and danger. Sometimes, when the 'jam' breaks up, the men have some distance to run over the rolling and heaving mass, urged on with frightful rapidity by the pressure of the accumulated water behind. A scramble for the shore follows, and woe betide the one who misses a step or slips a foot—a mishap too often resulting in loss of life. The daring of the men and their activity in keeping their feet in these circumstances are somewhat marvellous; but long practice makes the danger in their eyes of small account, and happily fewer accidents occur than might be expected. But at other times the jam is not so easily broken, especially with square timber, and delay is followed by most disastrous consequences; for if the river is falling in volume, then it becomes inevitable that the whole year's produce must be left in the bed of the river until another season comes round again. When they are running the slides exciting scenes often occur. These slides are sometimes of great length, and are constructed of large trees made square, and fitted carefully into a form resembling a gigantic square trough. The bed is about twenty-five feet wide, smooth and straight, with a few inches of water flowing over it; the sides, three feet high, serve as guides to the logs. An easy approach leads the timber on the slide, when it rushes down the slope with a rapidity which takes the breath away. At the bottom the plunge is into deep water.

The camp having broken up, the drive begins to the first lake, the men working from daylight to dark, through storm and sunshine; for there is now no time for lingering or delay, and it is yet early spring, with frosty nights and occasional snow-storms or heavy rain. Sometimes the men have not dry clothes for weeks. At night they gather a few pine or spruce branches to lie on, wrap themselves in their blanket and sleep soundly the sleep of the weary. Verily it is a time of hardship, borne cheerfully and without complaint, for every day brings them nearer home. In this country we have no idea of the rapid climatic changes characteristic of Canada. Spring is short—one week there is deep snow, and the next, the earth, which has been white for months, is laid bare, with birds in full song, and vegetation showing wonderful progress. When there is no rain the men get along comfortably enough. While some are bringing the logs down the river, others are engaged above the first slide preparing withes from saplings, to bind the square logs together and make small rafts called 'cribs.' These cribs contain perhaps a dozen logs of square timber, and are then ready for running

the larger streams and slides. Saw-logs are brought down singly except across the lakes. When a great number are enclosed by a 'boom'—a number of trees chained to one another—the two ends are brought together, enclosing the saw-logs. The crossing of the lake, sometimes with help of anchors and windlasses, is not without difficulty and risk, especially in strong headwinds, as the large surface exposed makes the wind take quick and strong effect.

But the raft, having crossed a lake, has to be separated at each river or slide, and again made up for every lake. Sometimes, when there has not been a sufficient quantity of snow or it has melted too rapidly, the rivers diminish in volume before the St Lawrence or other destination is reached, then the damming back of the water is resorted to, and on the accumulated water the saw-logs are floated past some obstacle. Usually the saw-logs reach their destination, where they are cut into deals, early in the summer, as the distance to be traversed is not so great; but the square timber has often a long distance to go before the deep water of the St Lawrence is reached. The great timbers, thirty to forty feet long, are made into 'cribs,' containing perhaps some twenty-five timbers, fastened together by cross-pieces called traverses, strongly pinned on. Not till the cribs reach the St Lawrence are they made into rafts to run the longer rapids. The raft is composed of a large number of cribs, fastened end to end, until a platform is made sometimes five hundred feet long by forty to fifty feet wide. It will be easily understood that an immense quantity of timber is used to compose a single raft. Starting from Lake Ontario, these rafts have to run the gauntlet of two great rapids—'Long Sault' and the 'Lachine'—with small lakes intervening. Sometimes, but very rarely, a raft of great value has been wrecked running these rapids. The great weight of a raft when once urged to a high speed by the force of the stream requires great caution in its management. In running the 'Lachine' rapids, which are the largest and swiftest on the continent of America, a special crew of French Canadians and half-breeds under a pilot are employed to conduct the raft through. The efforts of all on board are concentrated towards keeping it in the centre of the *approach* to the rapids; then flinging their long oars aside, they are on their knees, with clasped hands raised, imploring aid from on high. Well they know that no human efforts will avail them for any purpose when once caught in the embrace of that awful rush of angry water, which tumbles the great raft about, bending, rolling, and creaking as if it was a child's toy in the hands of a powerful man.

Once past these rapids, the lumberman's difficulties are ended. A tug steamer now takes the raft in tow, and soon reaches Quebec, probably to begin again another long journey across the ocean before being distributed into the various channels of industry.

In a few months the men are again in the forest, for it seems to hold out to them an attraction that is irresistible. Theirs is a free, healthy life, with but few diseases or ailments to trouble them; for this they are indebted to a fine climate, to their being constantly in the dry bracing atmosphere, and to an abundance of good, whole-

some food. Sometimes, however, as the spring advances, the glare of the sun upon the snow renders them subject to a peculiar and distressing affection of the eyes called 'snow-blindness,' from which they recover when the snow disappears; but when a man is once affected, the malady is apt to return with increasing force on each succeeding spring, until the sight is eventually destroyed. From the moment the sun sets, the afflicted are perfectly blind, and remain so until sunrise next morning. It is sad to see these great, powerful, and otherwise healthy men grow blind within a few minutes' walk of their destination, and have to be led into the shanty by their companions. But the lumberman heartily enjoys his wild free life, and duly appreciates the unlimited freedom which the forest gives.

While lumbering is at times a lucrative business, it is also subject to great risks and vicissitudes, most of which it is impossible to foresee with any degree of certainty; while every year as the lumberman has to go farther into the forest, these risks and uncertainties are becoming greater.

A CASE OF FRIENDSHIP.

THE doctor had ridden in from Thundagra through the glare and dust of the hot, blistering roads. After a long, cool drink, he stretched himself out at full length in a Ceylon chair under the shady veranda at the back of his house, and began to read the messages scrawled on his engagement slate, or contained in the various notes he found awaiting his arrival as usual. A ring at the bell!

The doctor said something between his teeth. He did not want to be called out again until bath and breakfast had become a pleasant memory. Therefore it was with some relief that he heard a well-known mellow Irish voice asking for him.

'The doctor has been out all night'—began the servant hesitatingly.

'Come in, Lodge,' the doctor's words came ringing down the passage, and a moment later a tall, slight, handsome young fellow stepped out into the veranda.

'Well, Mike, what can I do for you?' he began; then he looked more closely at his visitor, the survey ending in a dissatisfied frown. 'Why, man, what's wrong with you? And I'm told you rode a steeplechase last week! Look here, Mike, this won't do.'

'Not for long, I'm afraid,' acquiesced the other politely.

'What do you feel like?' shortly.

'The usual thing—beastly tired,' with an intense intonation of the adjective, which lent it an indescribable force and significance.

'Ah! Stand up and let me see.'

Some minutes were spent in scientific tapping and listening, while the doctor's face grew slowly graver. When he had finished his examination, he stood opposite to his patient, his eyes dropped, considering.

Lodge watched him with a softening of his devil-may-care-expression. 'No need to break it to me, doctor; I know it,' he said gently.

The doctor almost started.

'You know it, yet'—

'Was there not some old girl who declined to die in her bed?—Elizabeth was it? Well, I'm of her way of thinking.'

'But, my good chap, your present mode of life means—'

'Yes, I know it all. I was a medical student once—among other things.' His voice changed to banter again. 'Now, seriously, do you think it would add materially to my chance of happiness if I sat waiting for the gentleman with the scythe, and shook in my chair at every footstep? As it is, if I jostle against him in the street, so much the better.' He paused, then asked, 'Any excitement would do the trick, now, I suppose?'

The doctor nodded slightly, then turned away, and sat down. Human life meant so much to him! Was it not the thing he tended and defended, and battled for every hour of every day, and many a night? The conversation was growing too strained for him.

'I can only warn you,' he said grimly.

Lodge felt the meaning of his tone.

'Thanks.' Then changing the subject, asked, 'By the by, have you heard that Alexander has been appointed acting manager of the Southern Cross Banking Company's branch here?'

The doctor roused himself from thought with brisk interest in the news.

'No, by George! I am glad, not only for his sake, but Nettie Shelton's, too.'

'From all people say, there is little doubt of the appointment being confirmed in a few months,' went on Lodge. 'I must avoid his society now, I suppose. He will be a long sight too respectable a citizen to consort with a disreputable beggar like myself.'

'You might give the disreputable beggar a chance of regaining his reputation,' rejoined the doctor with some dryness.

'Now, doctor, do you really think it worth while? If there's only half-an-inch of candle left, what's the odds if it stands in a draught?' Lodge rose as he spoke. 'All the same, if I believed it could benefit Alexander, I'd alter everything—eat sawdust for the rest of my natural life. You know all about Alexander?'

'I know he is your very good friend. I wish you would try to eat sawdust for your own sake, Mike.'

'Not good enough; but we'll see,' Lodge answered carelessly. 'I've heard what I came to hear, so I won't keep you any longer.'

The doctor accompanied his visitor through the passage, and opened the front door. A portly, well-to-do gentleman in a shady hat stood outside, his hand on the bell.

'Mornin', doctor. Hullo, Mike!' was his greeting.

Lodge looked down at him with an air of haughtiness.

'Good-morning, Brodway,' he replied coolly.

A furtive punch in the ribs from the doctor brought home to him the sense of his blunder. Here was he, Mike Lodge, a clerk at Teddington's, cheeking the Mayor of Nawarra, whose word was a mighty word in the councils of the Southern Cross Banking Company, returning well-bred insolence for Brodway's vulgar insolence with a happy-go-lucky forgetfulness of the fortunes of his friend Alexander. He could have kicked himself for the mistake.

Brodway stepped into the passage, preventing Mike's exit as he did so, took off his hat, and, while he mopped his forehead, asked meaningly:

'You're a friend of Alexander's, I believe.'

'We were schoolfellows, though Alexander has left me far behind now,' Lodge answered modestly enough.

'Then you may tell him from me that he should choose his friends with more care,' said Brodway venomously. 'He is acting manager of the S.C.B. branch at present; but I shall make it my business to acquaint the directors with the character of his closest associates, and I imagine they will find some one to replace him before long. He's cooked his goose by his friendship, I assure you!'

The doctor thrust out the younger man into the street before he could reply.

'Go and eat sawdust,' he said.

Lodge raised his hat in his own careless, graceful way, and went off down the narrow red-hot street without another word.

'Going to the dogs as fast as he can, you know,' commented the fat man genially.

'More's the pity! Fine young fellow too, if'— He checked himself, and it was a kindly gaze he sent after the slender, listless young fellow sauntering along the distant pavement.

'Yes, "if," and a precious big "if" too! He's a desperate young scamp, let me tell you. There are a very few things I don't think him capable of!' exclaimed Brodway. 'Alexander is making a fool of himself over Master Mike Lodge. I wish some one would give him a hint to drop it. The directors of the Southern Cross Banking Company won't stand it much longer, I know that.'

'You are one of them, Mr Brodway, are you not?' The doctor asked the question with a directness which somehow tended to discompose his interlocutor.

'I am, sir, I am.'

'Then why should not a man for old acquaintance sake give a helping hand to another when he's down?'

'Because you can't touch pitch without soiling your hands. That's why, Dr English,' returned Brodway sharply, swelling out his chest. 'A man who wishes to get on in this world must choose his friends accordingly. And Alexander is trying for a responsible post—an excessively responsible post, I may say.'

'The company can't do better than take him, for he is a good man all round,' remarked the other shortly. 'He has none of poor Lodge's wild blood in him.'

That Mike Lodge was steadily going from bad to worse had been the talk of the township for months, and when the township of Nawarra decided upon anything, it held to the opinion formed very firmly. It was common talk that had it not been for the kindness of young Alexander of the S. C. Bank, Mike Lodge must have had his dismissal from Teddington's over that Thundagra affair. Alexander had behaved generously—had lent Lodge the money to put himself straight—and the general wonder was that Lodge had repaid him in full.

A certain incongruous friendship existed between the two. Most people believed it to have been begun long ago at home in the old country. However that might be, the community shook their heads over a continuance of the intimacy in the

present, when Alexander's prospects as a rising man, with a possible bank managership ahead of him rendered his choice of associates a matter of remark and importance.

That same evening two young men were strolling along the breakwater, of which Nawarra is so pardonably proud. One was short and square built, and he walked on lost in thought, the very rounding of his shoulders expressive of dejection. The other was Lodge, who glanced about him, enjoying in his reckless, lazy fashion all there was to enjoy in his surroundings. The evening was delicious after the heat of the day. A strong, cool breeze from the Antarctic regions swept in over the blue waters of the Southern Ocean. Away to the east stretched great, gray cliffs, their heads still crowned in sunlight, while the breakers, foaming before the wind, flung white wreaths about their feet.

'Enough,' said Lodge, stopping suddenly, and breaking the silence which had reigned unbroken between him and his companion since they set out. He threw himself into a seat as he spoke, with a sigh of fatigue.

'What? Tired already?' asked the other man, in half-peevish surprise. 'That comes of—'

'All right, old chap, don't preach. I know what it comes of better than you do. Instead of looking like a young king coming into his kingdom, you're as sulky as a bear. What's up, Bob?

Bob Alexander, thus appealed to, glanced back discontentedly towards the land, where parallel lines of roofs and dark green foliage, with here and there the sharp lance of a spire, showed clear-cut in the low rays of the sun, and considered the prospect awhile before he answered.

'I've had a letter from Brodway. He warns me that I must regard my position as a merely temporary arrangement, and urges me, even if it be for a short time, to maintain the traditions of the bank, not only in business transactions but in my private life. What's wrong with me, any way? I was pretty hopeful this morning, but now the outlook has changed.' The speaker's face was clouded, and between his brows showed two upright lines, telling of premature anxiety and care. He had toiled for years to gain his present position in steady, honest, intelligent labour, slowly reasoning out each step of his life; and now, after all, to be warned as to his private conduct!

'I always knew Brodway was rather a brute; but I have given him no cause of offence,' Alexander went on, as the other remained silent. 'It's maddening, Mike! What does it mean?'

'I can tell you,' said Lodge, as he lit a cigar adroitly in the teeth of the wind. 'It means—me!'

'Rot!' cried Alexander, but there was a self-conscious ring in the tone that betrayed him; 'how could it mean you?'

'He told me as much. And—well, we've hung together a bit the last couple of years since I came out. You've stood by me—I need say nothing about it, but I dare say you guess how I feel.' Mike spoke the halting sentences with unusual difficulty, turning away his head.

'Shut up!' growled his friend, who had the rooted objection to uttered sentiment of any sort common to his nation.

'I merely wished to mention that I appreciated your shelling out that coin, which you had been

hoarding for "plenishing"—is that what you call it?' mockingly. 'Because the chances were ten to one that I could never pay you back.'

'You have done so though—with interest too,' broke in the other crossly. 'And what more can a man want? Do chain up!'

Mike laughed.

'By the bye, have I told you that I am going away for a change?'

Alexander sat up at this and turned to him.

'For a change?' he repeated slowly; 'have Redington's given you—a holiday?'

'Well, no: I'm about to give them one. They accepted my resignation of the lucrative post I held in their firm with touching—gratitude, I was going to say—at any rate with alacrity.'

Alexander whistled, and considered Mike with a blank look.

'But have you thought it over? Why, Mike, it's next door to impossible to get anything to do anywhere! I wish you had come to me before you took such an extreme step,' and his anxious frown deepened.

'It would not have made any difference. I'm played out in this heat. I saw the doctor this morning, and he says I need change—or diet,' he added under his breath.

'What? English told you that? Now that I come to look at you, you do seem seedy.'

'You can put me out of your mind, Bob. I heard this morning for certain that my future is provided for.'

Alexander's face brightened.

'Good!' he said heartily; 'That's the best news I've heard this long while. How has it come about?'

'I'll tell you details another time, perhaps; now I want to get further into this letter of Brodway's.'

Alexander succumbed to this policy at once, and fell back into a discussion of his own affairs.

'Of course it means they won't make me manager after all, and yet Benson gave me to understand before he left that the Southern Cross Bank had a snug place waiting for him in the Melbourne house.'

'Has Brodway any spite against you?—or the Shelttons?' asked Lodge, looking out over the darkening sea.

'Pon my word, I can't tell!' replied the other warily. 'If it were not for Nettie's sake, it would not matter so much. She is very patient and cheery, but there are all the young ones growing up, and I often think it is selfish of me to keep her to her promise, and prevent her marrying, as she could any day, and get into peace and comfort out of that noisy, crowded house.'

'I don't fancy Nettie is the sort of girl to change her mind,' Lodge remarked quietly. 'Stick to it, Bob; she is as good and as pretty as they make 'em.'

It had grown suddenly dark, as though a lamp had been turned out, in the last two or three minutes, and in the dusk Alexander spoke softly.

'Once thought, Mike, you were the man.'

'With such a life behind me, could I have been?' Lodge asked somewhat bitterly.

'You had not my chances. You were handicapped from the beginning—your home and your stepmother—'

'I am what I am, Bob; in my place you would

not have wrecked yourself for any outside influence. It was in me—my fault or my fate, or both—don't you see? But to return once more to our sheep. Have you given up all hope of becoming manager?

'I think I may say yes. If Brodway has a grudge against any of us, he will carry out his threat—for his letter is a threat, nothing less. He is a vindictive animal. No, I don't see any chance, unless I had the luck to save the bank from being stuck-up,' he broke into a dreary laugh, 'and that sort of thing does not happen nowadays very often—at least not in a big place like this.'

'Not often, certainly,' agreed Lodge thoughtfully, then he also laughed softly to himself, and stood up. 'Well, suppose we toddle back now, Bob. You will want to look in at the Sheltonts', and see what light they can throw on our friend Brodway's action. Bid Nettie "good-bye" for me, and tell her—never mind.'

'What? You don't mean to say you are leaving before the Thundagra races?'

'The races? I'd clean forgotten them!' exclaimed Lodge in an odd tone. 'They don't come off till Saturday week, however, and I'm going to-morrow.'

Ten days had passed since Alexander assumed charge of the Nawarra branch of the Southern Cross Bank.

It was the day of the races, and all the employés had taken advantage of the Saturday half-holiday to join the mixed crowd on the course. Only the manager and the teller remained, and both were in the inner private room together. The latter was preparing to go.

'Any one at the counter out there?' said Alexander suddenly, raising his head.

'No, Mr Alexander. Breddon was the last, and he went out ten minutes ago.'

'Just go and see, Stokes; I thought I heard—'

As he spoke the folding door was swung open, admitting a wave of heat, and a tallish man, masked and thickly bearded.

'Hands up!' he said in a harsh voice, covering the two men, who were standing together, with a revolver.

Stokes obeyed at once, but Alexander began to fumble in his desk, though he knew well that the revolver was kept in a drawer in the outer office.

'Hands up, I say!'

But Alexander still fumbled in his desk.

The robber paused for a moment, then fired at Alexander.

The ball cut hissing through the tepid atmosphere above the manager's head to imbed itself in the partition behind him.

At the same instant Alexander sprang out upon the man, and struck the pistol from his hand.

There was a short, sharp struggle, and then the masked figure was lying on the ground, with Stokes kneeling on his chest, while the manager easily freed his wrists from the weakening grasp upon them.

Brodway, Doctor English, and the police arrived simultaneously. They found Stokes still seated on the robber's body.

'I hit him over the heart and he collapsed at once,' explained that hero with much pride. 'But only for Mr Alexander tackling him so smartly,

we should not have had a chance of our lives, and he'd have bagged the coin—Teddington's lump too.'

The doctor knelt down and hurriedly removed the mask, the beard coming off with it, and looked into the gray face with an unwonted throb at his heart.

'Mike Lodge!' almost screamed Brodway, in a frenzy of gratified malice. 'I always said so!'

'Never mind, Mr Brodway,' said the doctor sternly; 'he is beyond all human opinion now.'

There were many rumours about the attempted robbery of the bank. Some said Lodge was in difficulties—some said he had lost heavily at the races in the morning—most people agreed that he knew of Teddington's unusually large payments, and having a grudge against the firm for giving him the sack, as well as against the new manager of the bank, who was a more successful man than himself—he had resolved to settle up all old scores as well as annex the swag at one comprehensive swoop.

Alexander and the doctor walked back together from the funeral. That Alexander mourned for the dead as for a brother was plain.

'He was not at the races—he owed no man a penny—besides, he told me himself that his future was provided for, so it beats me to imagine what drove him to stoop to this wretched business,' Alexander began.

'Requiescat,' interposed the doctor abruptly, giving his companion a long questioning glance from under his thick brows. No, the dimmest idea of that wild self-sacrifice could never enter into this honest, narrow, conventional head. Well, he must keep silence too—for Lodge's sake.

'I hear you had good news this morning.'

'Yes. Brodway called and congratulated me before I left home.'

Then they parted. The doctor went on in silence for some distance, then suddenly raising his hat, he murmured, in a low voice, the old words:

'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'

Another conversation took place in a moonlit garden that same evening.

'I once thought that he cared for you, Nettie.'

A sob came with the reply, 'Oh no.'

'And—and I was wretched,' ventured the lover, 'for I feared you might have grown to care for him, he was so—'

'Oh Bob, let the past alone!' broke out the girl passionately.

And so the poor tragedy of Mike Lodge's life ended.

Q U I T S.

LOVE looked at me with pleading eyes;
In scorn I turned away;
I would not hearken to the words
That he was fain to say.

Alas! 'tis I who now seek Love,
And seek him but in vain;
As I served Love, so Love serves me
With scorn and high disdain!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.